



Conference Presentation Introductions and Openings

13

Abstract

In this chapter, we will discuss how to give effective openings in a CP. It is in the opening where the speaker can establish rapport with an audience, develop an interpersonal dimension, create a ‘voice’ for him or herself, ground the tenor, and provide the audience with the rhetorical structure of the CP. Therefore, effective openings are essential in determining effective CP performance. But which discursive, rhetorical, and linguistic choices are most frequent? And which would be most effective according to the presentation type and content? The generic, linguistic, and rhetorical features of introductions and opening CP moves might initially seem peripheral when the presenter naturally wishes to focus upon the research content, but the choice of opening gambit must be given thorough consideration by those presuming to teach CP skills to novice researchers and academics, as well as novice researchers who hope to successfully present at international academic conferences, as the explicit use of rhetorical moves and discourse markers in introductory sections will serve to both guide and engage the audience as well as to ‘position’ the speaker. Based on my observations, the most salient opening gambits included: opening directly into the research content, using rhetorical questions, shared research/academic knowledge, providing background information, and avoiding unnecessary self-introduction data, minimizing anecdotes, and limiting personal appeals to the audience. We will also look briefly at body language and posture concerns, followed by a short overview of how openings might best be managed in agnate conference speech events.

13.1 Information Structure in the Opening Gambit(s)

Presentation introductions and openings represent perhaps the greatest departure from the fundamentally multimodal nature of the CP genre. Openings are often performed independently of any accompanying written text and require the speaker to establish rapport with the audience in an unscripted form, which is why they tend to cause many problems for NNSs (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet, 2003) and novice presenters (Shalom, 2002), the latter who notes that the opening is not usually as codified as other sections of the CP, perhaps increasing the anxiety of such speakers.

Yet, interestingly, opening strategies were not selected as a primary anxiety-causing aspect of English presentations by the doctors I surveyed at my own university. However, as I attended research-based conferences I began to notice that opening gambits did constitute a problematic area for many presenters, both NNEs and NESs, novices and veterans, leading me to believe that this area needs to be addressed in greater detail.

The introduction or opening of a CP has been described as a ‘situated event’ which calls for ‘situationally appropriate’ choices and responses from the speaker (Shalom, 2002). As such, the opening of a plenary or keynote CP will differ greatly from the form of a FP/PS presentation. As Carter-Thomas and Rowley-Jolivet (2005) suggest, ‘The role of the introduction in setting up a rhetorically appropriate framework in response to the contextual and epistemological requirements of the genre is ... crucial.’ (p. 65). For example, Sanderson (2008) notes how a more personal voice, usually manifested in the CP opening, is associated with higher status researchers, such as plenary speakers and other academic celebrities. Carter-Thomas and Rowley-Jolivet (2003) provide a rhetorical move-based framework for openings that includes three central moves:

- (a) *Setting up the framework*—a step that includes both the interpersonal and discursive frames, providing the audience with a sense as to how the topic is organized
- (b) *Contextualizing*—a step which situates the talk within the conference setting by giving reference to conference themes or other speakers
- (c) *Research rationale*—a step that focuses on outlining the importance of the research and the reasons for which it was carried out.

Some of these moves can be noted in the examples that follow.

13.1.1 Opening Samples

In the CPs that I observed, after thanking the chair for the introduction and/or the audience for their attendance, the initial gambit for 128 FP/PS presenters I observed was divided as follows:

- Reading the title of the paper and/or giving a self-introduction (name and affiliation) n = 53
- Immediately explaining the research framework (e.g., *‘For the past two years we have been observing...’*) n = 27
- Providing an outline of presentation contents (*‘Today I’ll be talking about...’*) n = 23
- Making a lighthearted comment to the audience, often anecdotal, and/or commenting on the conference/location/other speakers in general (*‘This is my first time to visit Seoul and I’m very happy to be here...’*) n = 17
- Dealing with technical or audio problems (*‘Can you hear my voice?’*) n = 8
(In 27 cases, some combination of the above gambits was employed. In such cases, only the initial gambit is listed as an ‘n’ above).

The most striking feature among the numbers above is that 53 out of the 128 presenters (over 40%) opted to state the title of the presentation or personal data as an opening move even though, in every case observed, this information was not only written on the first displayed slide but was also included in the chairperson’s introduction, as well as being included in the conference program and, in most cases, on the presentation room door.

An opening or closing that carries impact can certainly go a long way toward making an effective or influential presentation. But the widespread habit of beginning with repeating the presentation title, one’s name or affiliation did not help in achieving that aim, particularly so for the short FP/PS presentations. Why?

As mentioned, the presenter’s name, position, affiliation, and presentation title is generally displayed prominently in a large font on the speaker’s first slide. Explicitly announcing that which is already clearly visible on the slide or is otherwise well known to the audience is tantamount to treating the audience not as interlocutors in a dialogic event but as non-sentient objects. It might be assumed that the speaker has not credited their audience with the intelligence or given knowledge one might expect in an academic setting. Perhaps unsurprisingly, when this gambit was chosen, several audience members quickly began scanning their programs.

Utilizing such a gambit may also have given many audience members the impression that the speaker was going to simply read aloud the entire contents of their slides and, thus, that the speaker might be insensitive to the real-time interactive environment, the interpersonal element that captures an audience. Such behavior, it might be argued, violates the interpersonal dimension of the presentation, since members of the audience may feel that the speaker is wasting their time by repeating known information.

Given the rapid-fire nature of FP/PS presentations, elaborate self-introductions not only can be time-consuming but may come off as being slightly self-absorbed or pretentious, while plenary speakers, being academic celebrities, often require no self-introduction. Therefore, the type of speaker that would most likely benefit from an explicit self-introduction would likely be those who cover a middle ground, those invited speakers who are not renowned but have been slotted into a ‘special’

presentation category, generally one that is longer than the times afforded to FP/PS speakers.

Below are several opening gambits that did not appear to be effective and I thus recommend avoiding. The first four connote the stilted discourses of secondary school classrooms:

My name is X, and my presentation is entitled Y.
Hello everyone.
My topic today is X.
Today I'm going to present about X.

Audience members might well be put off by the register of the openings above—they are redolent of a scripted self-introduction of ‘the English class English’ type’. The habit of practicing self-introductions of this sort in EFL classes is already dubious in that it is questionable whether this is a function that interactants use in actual English speech events—it seems to be prevalent mostly in EFL classrooms—and should not be applied wholesale to academic presentations.

The following three samples, on the other hand, would appear to express *too* much casual familiarity with the audience or, perhaps, lack of concern for the gravitas of the event, displaying an overapplication of the interpersonal dimension:

I'll present on X, OK?
OK, so, I've just changed the title to show... X.
I'm gonna talk about something that is very hot 'n sexy...

Although Carter-Thomas and Rowley-Jolivet (2005) argue that explicit self-introductions do maintain some background-setting value that can aid the audience, it should be emphasized that most of my own observations on opening gambits were limited to FP/PS presentations, where, unlike plenary and keynote speeches, time is limited and the audience is attending primarily to listen to research content rather than to acknowledge the complex background and/or affiliations of a specific speaker.

In my own observations, those speakers who opted for a personal comment or social utterance as an opening gambit in the FP/PSs did not always fare well. Remarks about visiting the locale for the first time or regaling the wonderful facilities and hosts often seemed somewhat out of place, forced attempts at creating a note of familiarity or encroaching upon the discourse domain of the celebrity plenary speaker.

FP/PS presenters who opened by admitting to nervousness or other personal and/or peripheral issues (observed on 15 occasions) were also generally met with a stony or awkward silence from the audience, which is even more likely to magnify the speaker's anxiety and sense of displacement. It appeared that speakers who were trying to appease the audience or apologize for shortcomings in advance did not succeed in establishing a felicitous interpersonal dimension. However, while it may well be argued that apologizing in the opening of a CP can serve as a type of

self-effacing positioning—marking one’s humble place within the discourse community—the upshot is that the audience may also view the tactic as time-wasting, might actually serve to heighten the audience’s discomfort, or it might lead the audience to note some fault or shortcoming they would otherwise not have been aware of.

Interestingly, admitting one’s nerves is described as an empathy-creating factor in Anderson’s (2016) ‘Ted Talks,’ in which the author encourages anxious speakers to explicitly do so. And an empathetic connection may indeed occur when the speaker is clearly not an experienced orator but has cachet that the audience recognizes, for example, a with victim of a traumatic experience speaking about their troubled past. But such speeches are far removed from the situational factors that govern and mark international academic conferences, where, in my observations, explicit responses to admissions of stage fright were *not* met with any palpable empathy. The FP/PS audience does not seem interested in, or overtly sympathetic to, confessions about the mental state of the speaker. Further, since most speakers will be equally nervous, there seems to be little reason to exempt a particular speaker on these grounds or assume that the attempt at appeasement will work.

Lighthearted opening gambits (typically involving anecdotes and humor) were widely used by plenary and featured speakers—who are given longer and less content-specific sessions, and these usually helped to establish an interpersonal platform that had the effect of relaxing and drawing in the audience.

Judging by audience reactions, the preferred approach in more effective FP/PSs was opening with a variation on the CP title, one which segued more naturally with the outline (e.g., ‘*So, as you can see, I’ll be discussing the treatment of rhinitis, with a special focus upon asthma-related rhinitis, first in children, and then in adolescents*’). This technique has been noted as being particularly effective due to the fact that some reformulation of the topic title tends to heighten interest value (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet, 2005).

Another effective opening gambit, noted on 17 occasions, was to mention research affiliations and roles/positions (also known as ‘self-mention’), not as an introduction move per se but as the immediate gateway into the presentation content itself (e.g., ‘*At the X clinic, I have been working with Dr. Y’s team over the past two years observing Z*’).

These opening gambits serve the valuable role of setting up the CP framework and placing the topic within a specific research context (Thompson, 1994). References to other speakers or conference themes as a means of backgrounding the presentation not only distinguish the CP from the written research mode but also help to establish recognition of the audience as peers (Shalom, 2002).

The strongest opening impact on the CPs I observed was from those presenters who gave credit to the audience by assuming that their peers were familiar with the topic, or at least grasped the purpose or topic area suggested in the CP title, and could therefore confidently delve into the presentation body, and quickly establishing a rhetorical flow. This was particularly notable in the case of short, rapid-fire

FP/PS CPs—plenaries or longer invited speeches generally require more foregrounding—and appears to be particularly effective for those NNES speakers who are not particularly confident about their English skills.

13.1.2 Eight Further Effective Opening Gambits

Eight other prominent and effective openings and introductions were noted in my observations and are described below.

1. The first of these gambits involves the standard opening move of responding to the chair and/or greeting the audience:

It is my pleasure to speak/be here today.

Thank you, Mr./Ms. Chairperson, for your kind introduction.

Thank you Mr./Ms Chairperson, and good morning/afternoon/evening colleagues.

Responding to the chair is a widely accepted and recommended courtesy but, unlike prominent award ceremony recipients, explicit acknowledgments and thanks should be kept to a minimum. While acknowledgments can serve as a form of politeness (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet, 2005), they are extraneous information for most of the audience and can be placed on the slide for view without being verbalized.

2. Establishing rapport with appeals to shared knowledge of a discourse community was also effective:

As you know/As you can see/As we all know...

Here, the presenter is opening with shared or established knowledge, which recognizes the audience as peers sharing in the narrative before moving on to the body of the CP. Using these forms also signals an imminent rhetorical move from the known to the unknown, or novel, content. The audience will then begin to anticipate the introduction of this new content.

3. Another effective approach involved questioning the established academic canon, one that anticipated counterintuitive or surprising findings:

It is often believed that...

While prior studies on X have shown...

This strategy was effective because it immediately informed the viewer or listener that the speaker is going to take a contrarian or contrastive position. In what way will popular or accepted wisdom be challenged? The audience may well be

stimulated by the possibility of their, or widely accepted, perceptions or beliefs being examined or questioned.

4. Rhetorical or research questions that anticipated question-to-answer structures were also frequent and effective:

What are the mechanisms that underlie incidences of X?

What is the difference between X and Y? More to the point, why are they different?

How should we approach the problem of X?

This question-to-answer model is effective as an opening strategy because the audience will naturally await the answer to the question (presuming that the question is one that the audience will consider relevant). This not only indicates a clear purpose or movement in the CP—from question to answer—but firmly underscores the notion that the speaker will be providing some novel and/or helpful information, as opposed to simply reporting data.

Another effective tactic was to accompany the opening gambit (particularly those that began with rhetorical questions or a surprise/challenge to orthodoxy) with a slide containing an unlabeled or mysterious visual—a baiting strategy that captured audiences by requiring further contextualization or response.

Presenters should, however, be careful to clearly distinguish the use of research and/or rhetorical questions from those questions directed at the audience which appear to demand an explicit response. These latter types of questions are fine within classroom settings or when leading a workshop or tutorial with a small number of participants as these are both highly interactive events. However, such moves can leave a CP audience perplexed. Does the speaker really expect an answer from someone present? Does he/she want some kind of consensus choral response? CP audiences will generally not offer a response or feedback to classroom-styled questions, which can lead to an awkward silence—and might possibly give audience members reason to feel that the academic presenter–audience space and peer-to-peer relationship have somehow been violated.

5. Another effective approach was to offer background information which helped situate the presenter and thus better allowed the audience to anticipate current findings:

In 2013 we began observation on 12 patients who presented with...

Over the past three years at X hospital, we have been observing...

Recently, our institution introduced...

In the above examples, a situating frame of the research is contained in one clear, compact utterance, moving directly into the background of the topic, much like a movie that starts with an action sequence. When the presenter has under 15 min to speak, proceeding as quickly as possible into the content is generally an effective strategy.

6. Opening by introducing a rationale or purpose provided a strong orientation anchor point for those research CPs which followed a traditional structure:

*I'd like to start my presentation by explaining the rationale for the program.
The data I'm going to present today is based upon...
In our study, we wanted to determine the correlation between X and Y.*

These forms also provide backgrounding, often added in extemporaneous speech, with only a single word heading (e.g., 'Rationale,' 'Background') or the CP title appearing on the accompanying slide.

7. Opening with a conclusion and then working backward to the research question and methods can also be a very powerful approach:

*The main cause of X, is not Y but in fact Z.
We have discovered a new relationship between X and Y.
There is increasing evidence that...*

This approach might be more common in political or debate speeches, but the initial impact in a research CP can help to hold the audience's attention as the presenter unlocks the process of research inquiry and findings—much like the climactic resolve-the-crime scene in an Agatha Christie mystery.

8. Often, presenters chose to emphasize either the novelty or newness of the contents in the opening:

*This is a simple but alarming topic regarding...
Recently, X has been reported in relation to X.
I'm here today to share with you some recent data on...
For decades there has been broad interest in X.*

Note in particular the enticing usage of the evaluative term 'alarming' in the second example, the use of the term 'recent' to establish the currency of the research in the second and third examples, and the hint of a solution (based on a problem–solution model) or long-awaited answer promised in the last example.

The CPs utilizing each of the opening gambits presented above were generally of a very high standard, even though many of the speakers might not otherwise be considered fluent English speakers. In short, it appears that quickly moving into presentation content without an explicit introductory preamble meets both the expectations and wishes of a FP/PS audience, allowing the speaker to establish the flow by immediately signaling the type of presentation structure (unknown-to-known, shared background knowledge to new information, questioning of established viewpoints, problem–solution, etc.). Novice presenters should always give due consideration as to which opening gambit best suits their research CP goals or purposes.

(Some of the samples listed in this chapter were originally compiled in 国際学会のためのサバイバル英語術, Guest, 2014.)

Questions and Exercises for Section 13.1

1. Why is stating one's name and presentation title often ineffective as a CP opening?
2. In what cases are jokes, anecdotes, and stories most suitable as CP openings?
3. Think of an academic topic with which you are familiar enough to give a short presentation. Start the presentation five times using five different strategies: Jumping directly into the research background, using a research or rhetorical question, challenging accepted positions or wisdom, starting from shared or known content, and starting with a conclusion. Which did you feel most comfortable with and why?
4. How might you change your opening gambit according to differing content type, audiences, or speaking environments?

13.2 Opening Paralinguistic Features and Conference Presentation Image Projection

We have already mentioned the importance of self-positioning a speaker in a CP and how this might be realized by making certain interpersonal and textual language choices. But what about the physical and visual image that the presenter gives off even before a slide is shown or a word uttered? Although I have stated that the opening section of a CP is highly unimodal (speech alone), the image that the speaker is projecting will precede the first utterance and thereby influence audience responses (Fig. 13.1).

Fig. 13.1 If an open posture is maintained, handheld notes need not be a distraction (photograph courtesy of EALTHY, www.ealthy.com)



Business Insider magazine has reported (see <http://www.businessinsider.com/things-people-decide-about-you-in-seconds-2016-11/#-1>) that people usually decide whether to like or trust another person, and make evaluations of their status and intelligence, within the first few seconds of contact. An academic CP audience is likely making similar assumptions about the speaker, including the quality and veracity of their research or academic standing, even as the speaker approaches the podium. In this way, it could be argued that a CP is a little like speed dating, a scenario in which an equal number of men and women are gathered hoping to find a suitable partner. Seated at tables but constantly rotating, prospective partners have one minute to size each other up and make tentative judgments before moving on to the next potential suitor.

To some extent, exuding an air of trustworthiness, comfort, self-control, and thereby eliciting empathy or validation from the audience will be determined by the speaker's initial body language and intonation, both of which are visceral markers of confidence and control. The means of establishing and/or developing such skills largely fall outside the scope of this book, although a considerable amount of information and advice on presentation body language can be found in commercial presentation guides.

Without using an actual physical demonstration it can be difficult to convey effective or questionable physical CP mannerisms—both the do's and the don'ts—in written mode. Nevertheless, there are a few basic mannerisms I have observed that should be considered by novice presenters, some of which may deviate from that advice found in popular guidebooks.

One of these regards the use of prepared and/or practiced gestures—something of a staple of public-speaking contest preparation and performance (Fig. 13.2). However, overt gestures in academic CPs are much less of a factor in determining effectiveness than the linguistic choices or visual modes that they seek to support, and in most CPs that I observed were used mainly for the purposes of pointing at the screen and controlling the visual display. Some other physical considerations are dealt below.

13.2.1 Should the Presenter Make Eye Contact with the Audience?

Strong, direct eye contact is not a norm in many—perhaps even most—cultures. Thus, many presenters, particularly those unused to performing a CP in *any* language, have some difficulty with maintaining eye contact. However, this need not be construed as a problem. In my observations, while almost no effective conference presenters kept their heads down, looking only at notes or their own computer screens, when addressing the audience they also tended not to focus upon any one member but rather shifted their upper torso positions from time to time, orienting their bodies to focus on one side of the room and, when the rhetoric naturally shifted, moved to face the other direction, before returning to the center only at the end of a unit (former US President Obama was particularly fond of doing this).



Fig. 13.2 Most common CP gesture: screen side hand extended with an open palm (photograph courtesy of EALTHY, www.ealthy.com)

A brief visual scan across the audience from time to time also has the effect of being both physically and mentally liberating for the speaker—physically in that it loosens both the head and neck and thereby allows for a stronger speaking voice to emerge, mentally in that the change of visual field more readily enables one to change topics or establish other textual orientations (Fig. 13.3). It should be noted that in workshops—and in CPs with very small audiences—the necessity of making some direct visual contact with the audience increases.



Fig. 13.3 Surveying the audience prior to beginning the CP can help prepare the speaker

13.2.2 Should the Presenter Look at the Big Screen?

Some commentators are adamant that presenters should never do this. My observations beg to differ. Occasionally, reorienting your own face toward the big screen can create a connection between the speaker, the audience, and the written text, allowing the audience to follow the presenter's orientation toward any written text that demands greater focus. The caveats would be to avoid looking at the screen for more than 15 or 20 s and to also avoid the temptation to repeatedly shine the laser in circles all over the screen, creating the CP equivalent of a psychedelic light show.

13.2.3 To What Degree Should the Presenter Adopt Casual or Formal Posture?

In many cultures, out of consideration of formality and related to concepts of propriety, those speaking in front of an audience are expected to keep a fairly rigid posture for the duration of the talk. This is a feature of politeness, indicating a certain respect for the sobriety and/or gravity of the academic forum. However, most of the effective presenters, originating from a variety of different ethnic/cultural backgrounds, that I observed shifted their physical position—hips, feet, hands—about every 30 seconds to one minute, simply to keep their body loose and relaxed, but without appearing excessively nonchalant or disrespectful of the occasion. Often, such moves were performed very subtly so as not to appear overly flamboyant. Usually, the audience will appreciate this shift in physical orientation since, as mentioned earlier, it can actually enhance the force of verbal signals and transitions, reinforce rhetorical moves, and allow for more dynamic intonation.

13.2.4 Nervous Tics

While it is natural for most speakers, particularly novices, to feel nervous when delivering a CP, certain postures and movements can have a particularly negative impact upon the audience. Even though most CP audience members are focusing upon the screen, habitual touching of the face and hair can draw attention away from the written or spoken texts.

Uneasy and crooked, deer-in-the-headlights postures, with the speaker's upper torso bent toward the podium or desktop—perhaps in anticipation of advancing a slide but lacking the ease of transition to return to a more natural position—are uncomfortable to hold for more than a minute and can be even more uncomfortable for the audience to observe. This position, located somewhere in an indeterminate space between the casualness of resting an arm on the podium and staying in a rigidly stiff and formal posture, can negatively affect voice projection and discourage regular breathing. Often related to this is the phenomenon of dry throat—ubiquitous nervous gulping—which is why many veteran speakers not only take a drink before presenting but also have a glass or bottle made available on the podium.

13.2.5 ‘Borrowed’ Texts

CP introductions I observed often involved expressions of thanks, acknowledgment, and statements of gratitude. Often, these require a certain level of sobriety and formality in order to be effectively conveyed. When doing so as a non-native speaker of the CP language, many choose to use highly formalized, established phrases that are often not in accordance with the natural ‘voice’ of the speaker—terms or phrases that are outside the speaker’s linguistic comfort zone. Such scripted formalities are often ‘borrowed’ forms—often solicited as advice from native speakers of the CP language or adopted wholesale from written texts.

However, when performed under duress, such forms can appear to both speaker and audience to be artificial and stilted, occasionally to the point where it can adversely affect the subsequent body of the CP, causing the speaker to lose confidence and possibly even alienating an audience. The dynamic with the audience can be negatively impacted particularly in cases when presenters appear to be mouthing platitudes of syllables rather than engaging in an interactive enterprise with the audience. In such cases, speakers should consider choosing to open only with phrases that they are comfortable with or familiarize themselves with the more formalized foreign language phrases until these become second nature, in concord with their ‘own voice.’

Questions and Exercises for Section 13.2

1. Although traditional presentation advice tells us to ‘make eye contact with the audience,’ why is this less of a factor in an academic CP?
2. In what situations do you think it is acceptable for the presenter to turn and look at the large screen?
3. What is the connection between nervousness and the role of water on the podium?
4. Suggest three ways in which a speaker can overcome nervousness that might be distracting to the audience.

13.3 Openings in Agnate Speech Events

How does one manage the opening of a symposium or a workshop? Because both of these events are more open-ended and dynamic than found in standard CPs, it can be difficult to give specific advice. But based on the openings I observed for these events, I would suggest the following considerations:

13.3.1 Symposia/Colloquia

Symposium/colloquium speech rarely begins *in situ*. Rather, the moderator will tend to begin proceedings by stating the nature or current status of the content or topic being discussed, the scope of discussion, interactional ground rules, justification for hosting the topic as a symposium (often entailing some background information or rationale demonstrating the gravity of the topic or issue), and introductions of the individual speakers.

After the moderator's introduction of the first speaker, thanking the moderator and an initial greeting to the audience is in order:

Thank you Mr./Ms. Moderator. Good Afternoon

Subsequent consecutive speakers will generally begin by building upon the existing topic, often as a response to a previous speaker. Among those I regularly noted were:

- (a) *Let me begin this symposium by outlining the basis of/my position on X.*
- (b) *I'd like to add a new perspective/some new data to what Dr. X has already said.*
- (c) *Earlier, Professor X referred to...*

13.3.2 Workshops

Workshops are far more common at conferences where skills, as opposed to data, are being disseminated and therefore tend to be more instructional and procedural in form than standard CPs. While workshops were held at a 1 to 10 ratio (*vis-à-vis* standard CPs) at the applied linguistics conferences I attended, there were comparatively few workshops (closer to 1 to 50) held at the medical conferences. Medical (and other scientific) workshops tended to be conducted as a part of special seminars sponsored by research societies or commercial interests, often conducted outside the regular conference milieu.

While many presenters in the language education fields felt confident enough to conduct conference workshops (most are, after all, teachers by profession), those conducted at medical conferences tended to be limited entry sessions managed by highly specialized professionals or commercial sponsors.

At workshops, one expects some type of personalized, hands-on practical training to occur, typically involving management approximating a 'classroom' mode—pair work, teamwork, group work, or interactive discussion. As a result of the pedagogical purpose underscoring workshops, leading a workshop demands the deployment of more interactive skills, in particular so-called classroom management skills such as giving concise instructions, managing activity times and

personnel, changing physical locations, of participants controlling the timing and distribution of handouts or other sorts of realia, as well as dealing with more discursive breakdowns, interruptions, and comments from participants.

In short, workshops are more dialogic, dynamic, and open-ended than CPs. Workshops participants should be aware of this too—active participation with peers and feedback/response to the instructor/presenter is considered imperative. Because of the inherently open-ended and interactive nature of workshops, it is harder to identify specific moves or generic discourse patterns common to the event, as the personality of the instructor/presenter will play a larger role in determining effective or appropriate language choices than is the case for CPs.

Below is a generic workshop opening sample made up of composite openings noted in conference workshops:

Good afternoon. Thank you for choosing to attend this workshop. As you can see/know, today I'll be demonstrating X. First, I'd like you to get into pairs/find a partner.

These forms could be restated as the following synoptic formulae:

Greeting, thanks, stating focus/goal/purpose of workshop, initiating management of participants.

Questions and Exercises for Section 13.3

1. What factors tend to distinguish opening gambits used in symposium CPs and workshops as opposed to FP/PS presentations?
2. In opening a symposium, specific reference should be made to whom or what?
3. In opening a workshop, what features of tenor might the leader wish to adopt that distinguishes it from a CP?

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